

## **PATTERNS OF METHAMPHETAMINE PRODUCTION AND USE AMONG AN INTERNATIONAL SAMPLE OF METHAMPHETAMINE ‘COOKS’**

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**Introduction and Aims:** Clandestine laboratories where individuals (known as ‘cooks’) manufacture methamphetamine pose significant risks to the environment and people who come into contact with them. There is limited research describing methamphetamine-producing clandestine laboratories, and specifically methamphetamine cooks. This study aims to address these gaps through a descriptive analysis of a large international sample of methamphetamine cooks.

**Design and Methods:** Using data from the 2017 and 2018 Global Drug Surveys, we identified 125 individuals who responded “yes” to the question “Have you ever made your own methamphetamine drugs?” We calculated descriptive statistics for these respondents’ socio-demographic variables, patterns of methamphetamine production and personal use of methamphetamine.

**Results:** Of the 125 individuals who self-reported previous manufacture of methamphetamine, the majority were male (81.8%), Caucasian (70.4%), and respondents had a mean age of 30 (range 16-60). Respondents’ most common country of origin was the USA (37.6%), followed by Australia (10.4%), New Zealand (8.8%), Germany (7.2%), and Canada (5.6%). Respondents reported a high level of polysubstance use in the past 30 days, including high levels of tobacco (78.4%) and methamphetamine (60%). The most commonly-reported production method was using ephedrine or pseudoephedrine as a precursor (64.8%). Pharmacies were the most common source of precursors (49.6%), followed by friends (24%). Nearly half (47.2%) produced methamphetamine exclusively for self-consumption.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** This description of a large sample of methamphetamine cooks has potential utility to drug and law enforcement personnel aiming to reduce the individual and public health harms associated with the clandestine manufacturing of methamphetamine.

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